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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the fifteenth report of the International Labour Organisation under article 18 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1988 (LX).

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PART I

Introduction

The present report has been established according to the arrangements approved by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office[1] to give effect to resolution 1988 (LX) of 11 May 1976 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council requesting specialised agencies to submit reports in accordance with Article 18 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, on the progress made in achieving the observance of the provisions of the Covenant falling within the scope of their activities. According to these arrangements, the International Labour Office is entrusted with the task of communicating to the United Nations, for presentation to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, information on the results of the operation of various ILO supervisory procedures in the fields covered by the Covenant. It should remain open for the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations to report on particular situations whenever it deems this desirable or when specifically requested to do so by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The report will follow the approach adopted since 1985, and will contain in Part II: (a) indications concerning the principal ILO Conventions relevant to Articles 6-10 of the Covenant; and (b) indications concerning ratifications of these Conventions and comments made by ILO supervisory bodies with regard to the application of these Conventions by the States concerned (in so far as the points at issue appear to have a bearing also on the provisions of the Covenant). The latter indications are based mainly on the comments of the Committee of Experts resulting from its examination of the reports on the Conventions in question. Account was also taken of the conclusions and recommendations adopted under constitutional procedures for the examination of representations or complaints and, in the case of Article 8 of the Covenant, of the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Freedom of Association of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office following examination of complaints alleging violation of trade union rights.[2]

The list of countries for which information has been provided in the present report appears in the table of contents. A recapitulatory list of States Parties to the Covenant and of ILO reports containing information concerning them will be found in the Annex.

General considerations

In previous reports, the Committee of Experts has commented on several occasions on the relationship between the provisions of the Covenant and the standards laid down in international labour Conventions, the nature of the obligations resulting from them and the way in which the Committee of Experts consequently presented its comments on the implementation of the Covenant. Upon the completion of the first cycle of the reporting programme on the Covenant, the Committee of Experts recalled these general observations in the ILO's sixth report (E/1983/40), which it hoped would be useful to States Parties and would be of interest for the examination of the application of the Covenant. The main points of these observations were also recalled in the ILO's tenth report (E/1988/6). Consequently, reference is made to the reports in question.

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[1] Decisions of the Governing Body at its 201st Session (November 1976) and at its 236th Session (May 1987).

[2] Information on the procedures and machinery for the implementation of ILO standards, including the operation of its supervisory bodies, can be found in UN Action in the Field of Human Rights (United Nations publication, New York, 1988, Sales No. E.88 XIV.2), Chapter XIV, section D.1. Further information can be found in a document submitted to the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights, published as UN document A/CONF.157/PC/6/Add.3.

PART II

A. Principal ILO Conventions relevant to Articles 6-10 of the Covenant

The following is a list of the principal ILO Conventions relevant to each of Articles 6-10 of the Covenant.[3] Indications on the ratification of these Conventions by each State concerned are given in section B of this part (indications concerning the situation of individual countries).

Article 6 of the Covenant

Unemployment Convention, 1919 (No. 2)
Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention, 1933 (No. 34)
Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)
Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 96)
Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117)
Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140)
Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)
Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)
Employment Promotion and Protection Against Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168), Part II

Article 7 of the Covenant

Remuneration

Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26)
Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99)
Minimum Wage-Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)

Equal remuneration

Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)

Rest, limitation of working hours and holidays with pay

Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1)
Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)
Hours of Work (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1930 (No. 30)
Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47)
Holidays with Pay Convention, 1936 (No. 52)
Holidays with Pay (Agriculture) Convention, 1952 (No. 101)

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[3] There are in addition, particularly for Articles 7 and 9, a number of Conventions dealing with corresponding matters in particular occupational sectors (e.g. road transport, seafarers, fishermen, dockworkers, plantation workers, nursing personnel) or with particular categories of workers (e.g. migrant workers, indigenous and tribal peoples, workers in non-metropolitan territories). These Conventions are not included in the present list but are taken into account in the indications concerning the situation in individual countries.

Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106)
Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)

Safe and healthy working conditions

White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13)
Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929 (No. 27)
Protection Against Accidents (Dockers) Convention, 1929 (No. 28)
Protection Against Accidents (Dockers) Convention (Revised), 1932 (No. 32)
Safety Provisions (Building) Convention, 1937 (No. 62)
Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)
Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115)
Guarding of Machinery Convention, 1963 (No. 119)
Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1964 (No. 120)
Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127)
Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)
Benzene Convention, 1971 (No. 136)
Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139)
Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148)
Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152)
Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)
Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)
Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162)
Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167)
Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170)
Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171)

Article 8 of the Covenant

Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)
Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135)
Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141)
Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151)
Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)

Article 9 of the Covenant

Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 12)
Workmen's Compensation (Accidents) Convention, 1925 (No. 17)
Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention, 1925 (No. 18)
Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19)
Sickness Insurance (Industry) Convention, 1927 (No. 24)
Sickness Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1927 (No. 25)
Old-Age Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 35)
Old-Age Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1933 (No. 36)
Invalidity Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 37)
Invalidity Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1933 (No. 38)
Survivors' Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 39)
Survivors' Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1933 (No. 40)
Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention (Revised), 1934 (No. 42)
Unemployment Provisions Convention, 1934 (No. 44)
Maintenance of Migrants' Pension Rights Convention, 1935 (No. 48)
Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)

Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)
Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No. 121)
Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128)
Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130)
Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982 (No. 157)
Employment Promotion and Protection Against Unemployment, 1988 (No. 168)

Article 10 of the Covenant

(a) Maternity protection (re paragraph 2)

Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3)
Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103)

(b) Protection of children and young persons in relation to employment and work (re paragraph 3)

Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 5)
Minimum Age (Sea) Convention, 1920 (No. 7)
Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 10)
Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921 (No. 15)
Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932 (No. 33)
Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised), 1936 (No. 58)
Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937 (No. 59)
Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised), 1937 (No. 60)
Minimum Age (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 112)
Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 117)
Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 123)
Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 6)
Night Work (Bakeries) Convention, 1925 (No. 20)
Night Work of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946 (No. 79)
Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948 (No. 90)
White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13) (Article 3)
Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115) (Article 7)
Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127) (Article 7)
Benzene Convention, 1971 (No. 136) (Article 11)
Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention, 1921 (No. 16)
Medical Examination (Seafarers) Convention, 1946 (No. 73)
Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946 (No. 77)
Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946 (No. 78)
Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113)
Medical Examination of Young Persons (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 124)

B. Indications concerning the situation of individual countries

For each Article of the Covenant under consideration, these indications show the state of the ratifications (excluding ratifications that were subsequently denounced) of the corresponding Conventions by the country in question, and references to the relevant comments of the supervisory bodies with regard to the application of these Conventions. Full copies of the comments of the Committee of Experts are appended, and should be consulted for further details.

The absence of any such references signifies either that there are no comments at the present time regarding the application of a particular Convention, or that the comments that have been made deal with points not relating to the provisions of the Covenant or to matters (for example, simple requests for information) which it would not appear to be necessary to deal with at this stage, or again that the government's reply concerning the application of a Convention on which comments had been made has not yet been examined by the Committee of Experts.

When references are made to the "observations" of the Committee of Experts, their texts are published in the report of the Committee for the same year (Report III (Part 4A) of the corresponding session of the International Labour Conference). In addition, comments have been formulated in requests for information addressed directly by the Committee of Experts to the governments in question; such comments are not published but the text is made available to the interested parties.

1. Situation concerning Articles 6-9 of the Covenant

BELARUS, REPUBLIC OF

Information concerning this country was supplied in the second (E/1979/33) and the seventh (E/1985/63) reports of the ILO. For some cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

The Republic of Belarus has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 27, 29, 32, 47, 52, 58, 59, 60, 77, 78, 79, 87, 90, 98, 100, 103, 106, 111, 115, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 138 and 142.

The Committee of Experts noted in a direct request in 1992 that the great majority of reports received did not contain any information in reply to the various questions included in the report forms which relate to such matters as the results of labour inspection, the number of workers protected, statistics of employment injuries and occupational diseases, judicial and administrative decisions involving questions of principle relating to the application of the Convention concerned, etc.

Article 6

The Committee of Experts noted in a 1992 direct request under the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), that the fundamental principles of penal legislation were currently under review, and expressed the hope that the Government would be able to adopt measures in conformity with the Convention.

In relation to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), in a 1991 direct request the Committee of Experts requested information on measures to amend the legislation of the Byelorussian SSR. It also requested information on the measures taken to promote equality of opportunity and treatment of men and women, and on the promotion of e

equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation irrespective of race, religion or national extraction.

Under the Employment Policy Convention, 1964, (No. 122), it was noted by the Committee of Experts in 1991 that a new orientation had been given to the Government's employment policy.

Article 7

As concerns the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 direct request that a new Act relating to Enterprises of the Byelorussian SSR came into force on 1 January 1991. It requested information on measures to make sure that all the elements of remuneration comply with the principle equal pay for work of equal value. The Committee also requested further information on the extent to which the wage differential has been reduced through application of the principle of the Convention.

In relation to the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960, (No. 115), the Committee of Experts made reference to its General Observation under this Convention and asked the Government to indicate, considering the matters raised in the conclusions to the General Observation the steps taken or being considered to ensure effective protection of workers against ionising radiations and to review maximum permissible doses of ionising radiation in the light of current knowledge.

Article 8

Under the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), it was noted by the Committee of Experts in its observation of 1991 that article 6 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian Republic had been amended, and now lays down the principle of pluralism for political parties and public organisations. It also noted that the Charter of the new Federation of Byelorussian Trade Unions and a Bill on the rights and guarantees of trade unions had been adopted at the Congress of Trade Unions of the Byelorussian Republic in October 1990.

CZECH AND SLOVAK FEDERAL REPUBLIC

Information concerning this country was supplied in the second (E/1979/33) and the eighth (E/1986/60) reports of the ILO. For a number of cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

Czechoslovakia has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 1, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 48, 52, 87, 88, 98, 99, 100, 102, 111, 115, 120, 122, 128, 130, 139, 140, 142, 148, 155, 159, 161 and 167.

Article 6

Comments made by the Committee of Experts in 1992 under the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), noted with satisfaction the repeal in 1990 of the provision under which a person who systematically avoided honest work and allowed himself to be maintained by somebody else or obtained his means of livelihood in some dishonest manner, was liable to imprisonment for up to three years.

In relation to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 observation that at its February-March 1992 Session the Governing Body of the ILO approved the report of the Committee set up to examine a representation made under article 24 of the ILO Constitution alleging non-observance by the Czech and Slovak Republic of Convention No. 111. The compatibility with the Convention of Act No. 451/1991 of 4 October, known as the "Screening Act", was examined. The Committee set up to

examine the representation considered the exclusions of specified categories of persons from different functions and occupations. The Committee of Experts has requested the Government to report on the measures taken to implement the recommendations given by the Committee set up under article 24.

As concerns the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), the Committee of Experts noted in its comments of 1992 the entry into force of a new Employment Act on the 4 December 1990. It also noted that unemployment, which appeared in 1990, has greatly increased since the beginning of 1991 and hoped that the Government would be able to supply statistical data in this regard. It noted that the unemployment rate was generally higher in the Slovak Republic than in the Czech Republic.

Article 9

In relation to the Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130), it was noted by the Committee of Experts that a reform of the sickness insurance scheme is being prepared and the planned legislation should be in line with the provisions of the Convention.

HUNGARY

Information concerning this country was supplied in the first (E/1973/27) and the seventh (E/1981/41) reports of the ILO.

For a number of cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

Hungary has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 26, 27, 29, 42, 48, 52, 62, 77, 78, 87, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 111, 115, 122, 123, 124, 135, 136, 139, 140, 142, 159, 161 and 167.

Article 6

In relation to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), the Committee of Experts noted that the 1989 Constitution guarantees everyone the right to free choice of employment and occupation.

Under the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), the Committee of Experts asked in its 1992 comments for information on the effect given to the Bill on vocational training.

In its 1991 observation on the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958 (No. 111), the Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction that the Constitution now ensures for every person within its territories human and civil rights, without distinction of any kind. The Labour Code has also been amended to extend the prohibition of discrimination also to discrimination based on political opinion. The Committee of Experts requested information on measures, within the framework of the current social and economic changes, to ensure the observance of equality of opportunity and treatment.

As concerns the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), it was noted by the Committee of Experts in 1991 that the country was experiencing big changes in the context of the accelerated transformation of the economy into a market system and thus a period of restructuring of the labour market. The Committee of Experts therefore requested information on the situation, level and trends of employment, unemployment and underemployment. The Committee also asked for information on the wage reform and other questions.

Article 7

In relation to the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 comments that the Government has not, for some years, provided sufficient information to allow an assessment of the extent to which the wage differential has been reduced through application of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. The Committee of Experts therefore requested the Government to provide full information on this issue.

Under the Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139), the Government was requested in 1992 by the Committee of Experts to indicate whether it is still planning to revise Decree No. 4/1981/III.31/EUM as stated in previous reports and, if not, to indicate the measures taken or planned to make sure that workers receive medical examinations or other tests, as necessary, after leaving work involving exposure to carcinogenic substances.

Article 8

Comments made by the Committee of Experts in 1991 under the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), noted with satisfaction the adoption of the new Constitution of 1989, of Act No. II of 1989 on the right to organise, and Act No. VII of 1989 on the right to strike. This established the possibility of trade union pluralism and guaranteed workers the right to call strikes to defend their economic and social interests.

As concerns the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), the Committee of Experts made reference to its previous comments and noted the amendments to the 1967 Labour Code, by Act No. V of 1989, which favoured collective bargaining as a means of settling conditions of employment. Two collective framework agreements had been concluded since the new Act came into force.

In its 1992 comments on the application of the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135) the Committee of Experts noted that all rights recognised by the Labour Code for trade unions shall be afforded to representative bodies established explicitly for workers. Hence, the protection accorded to trade union officials is also applicable to elected workers' representatives in Hungary.

ITALY

Information concerning this country was supplied in the fifth (E/1982/41) report of the ILO. For a number of cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

Italy has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 1, 2, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 26, 27, 29, 32, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 48, 52, 81, 87, 88, 96, 98, 100, 101, 102, 105, 106, 111, 118, 119, 120, 122, 129, 132, 135, 139, 141, 142, 148 and 151.

Article 6

In relation to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) the Committee of Experts noted with interest, in its 1992 observation, Act No. 125 of 10 April 1991 on positive action for the attainment of equality between men and women at work, and its implementing Decrees. It asked the Government to transmit with its next report information on the implementation of Act No. 125, and practical information on those aspects of the national policy for the promotion of equality that relate to the criteria other than sex on the basis of which discrimination may be prohibited. It was also noted that a number of collective agreements have included special clauses designed to promote equality for women and establishing joint committees to that end. Collective agreements recently concluded contained a clause on the personal dignity

of the workers which prohibits sexual harassment and prescribes a procedure for dealing with cases of such harassment.

In its 1992 observation on the application of the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) the Committee of Experts noted the conclusions of the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards in June 1991, stating that, despite the Government's efforts, the employment situation had not been resolved and it remained worrying, especially with regard to discrepancies between regions and age groups, and between the sexes.

Article 7

In relation to the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 observation that under draft legislation before the Senate many of the responsibilities relating to safety and health at work would be shifted back to the labour inspectorate, and that this would help to coordinate inspections.

Under the Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106) the Committee of Experts noted in 1992 that under Executive Decree No. 268 of 1987 a worker performing work on a public holiday falling on a day of rest following five days of work may opt for the equivalent compensatory rest or the payment of standard overtime. In these circumstances the Convention does not permit payment instead of compensatory rest time. The Committee of Experts therefore asked the Government to indicate what steps had been taken or are planned to ensure that this provision of the Convention is applied.

As concerns the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 comments the adoption of the Legislative Decree of 30 July 1990 which gives effect to EURATOM Directives which lower the maximum level of exposure of workers to ionising radiation.

Comments made under the Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139) by the Committee of Experts noted the adoption of Legislative Decree No. 277 of 15 August 1991 which gives effect to a number of EEC directives concerning the protection of workers against hazards of exposure to chemical, physical and biological agents. No information had been provided concerning the practical application of the Convention and the Committee of Experts asked the Government to provide such information in its future reports.

As concerns the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the adoption of Act No. 125 of 1991 was noted by the Committee of Experts in its 1992 comments under Convention No. 111. The Committee asked the Government to indicate specifically how far the wage differences between men and women had been reduced by the application of the Act. It further asked the Government to indicate how the application of the principle of equal remuneration is ensured as regards those elements of remuneration which are paid or granted in addition to the basic wage.

Article 9

In relation to the Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118) the 1992 observation by the Committee of Experts noted the reply to the Committee's previous comments concerning the nature of the "social pension" to which Italian citizens are entitled who are above the age of 65 years and who satisfy certain means criteria. The Government maintained its position that the pension has the character of an assistance payment and therefore falls outside of the scope of the Convention.

NEW ZEALAND

Information concerning this country has not been supplied previously.

New Zealand has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 26, 29, 30, 32, 42, 44, 47, 52, 58, 59, 60, 81, 88, 99, 100, 101, 105, 111 and 122.

Article 6

In the Committee of Experts observation of 1992 under the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), it was noted that the Government indicated in its report that it anticipated that the review of the Shipping and Seamen Act, 1952, would be completed and policy recommendations be made by mid-1992, to recommend the removal of the forced labour provisions of the 1952 Act with the adoption of an entirely new Act in 1993. The Committee of Experts recalled that it had been commenting on the same provisions for several years and expressed the firm hope that the Government would soon be able to report on progress made in the adoption of the necessary amendments to bring its legislation into conformity with the Convention.

As concerns the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) the Committee of Experts noted in its 1991 observation that the Employment Equity Act came into force on 1 October 1990 but was repealed in December 1990, because the Government did not consider that greater equity in employment opportunity would be achieved through the procedures put into place by the Act. It was further noted that following the repeal of the Employment Equity Act, the Government established a Working Party on Equity in Employment to evaluate equal employment opportunities initiatives and report to the Government on the most effective means of developing and implementing its equity in employment policy. The Committee hoped that the Government would adopt further measures concerning the policy on equality in employment following the recommendations of the Working Party.

In relation to the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122) the Committee of Experts noted, in its 1991 observation, the deteriorating trend in employment.

Article 7

As concerns the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) it was noted by the Committee of Experts in its 1992 observation that the Equal Pay Act, 1972 had been amended by the Equal Pay Amendment Act, 1991. The amendment means that it is now unlawful for employers to refuse or omit to offer or afford any person the same terms of employment, conditions of work, fringe benefits, and opportunities for training, promotion and transfer as are made available for persons of the same or substantially similar qualifications employed in the same or substantially similar circumstances on work of that description by reason of the sex of that person. The enactment of the Employment Contracts Act, 1991 was also noted which, according to the Government, reflected its policy that the determination of rates of remuneration is the sole responsibility of the parties to the employment contract. Information was requested by the Committee of Experts concerning the implementation of these Acts. The Committee of Experts also noted statistical data provided by the Government which indicates that women's average hourly earnings are about 80-81 per cent of men. The Committee hoped that some of the problems and limitations to reductions in the wage differential, such as education, training, and women's family responsibilities, would be addressed in the context of the measures being taken to promote equality in general.

NICARAGUA

Information concerning this country was supplied in the eighth (E/1986/41) report of the ILO.

For a number of cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

Nicaragua has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 1, 2, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 87, 88, 98, 100, 105, 111, 119, 122, 131, 135, 139, 140, 141 and 142.

Article 6

In its comments under the Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88), the Committee of Experts noted that national employment advisory committees were functioning until March 1988 and since that time their activities have been suspended. The Committee of Experts further noted that the Civil Service Act has been suspended as long as there are no regulations issued under it. It requested information on the legal status and conditions of service of employment service staff.

In relation to the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) it was noted by the Committee of Experts in 1992 that the Women's Bureau is in the process of closing down but that the Institute for Women has been created instead. It requested information on all measures taken or contemplated to promote in practice the principle of equality laid down in the Political Constitution of 1987 and on the action taken with regard to ethnic minorities.

As concerns the Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards), 1962 (No. 117), the Committee of Experts noted in its comments of 1992 the Government's indication that it is elaborating the draft Labour Code with the assistance of the ILO and requested the Government to keep it informed. The Committee of Experts requested the Government once again to provide information on the magnitude and direction of migratory flows within the country, as well as information on international migration.

In its 1991 comments under the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), the Committee of Experts noted that the Government had not replied to its previous comments. In 1990 the Committee of Experts had expressed its concern at the continued deterioration of the economic situation and its impact on the labour market, and asked the Government to submit information on the consultations held with representatives of employers' and workers' organisations and of the persons affected, including those working in the rural and informal sectors.

Article 7

The Committee of Experts has noted, in comments under a certain number of ILO Conventions, the absence of legislation, regulations and other measures which would give effect to the requirements of these instruments on occupational safety and health. See the attached comments on the following Conventions:

White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13)
Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115)
Guarding of Machinery Convention, 1963 (No. 119)
Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127)
Benzene Convention, 1971 (No. 136)
Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139)

Article 8

As concerns the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Committee of Experts noted in a 1992 observation the information concerning compliance with the recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry appointed under article 26 of the ILO Constitution to examine the complaint against Nicaragua concerning the application of Conventions Nos. 87, 98 and 144. The Committee of Experts further noted that the Government has prepared a draft Labour Code taking into account the observations of the Committee of Experts, of the Commission of Inquiry and of the Office.

In its observation of 1992 under the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), the Committee of Experts also made reference to the recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry, as mentioned above. It reminded the Government of its observations concerning the need to repeal Decree No. 530 of 24 September 1980, subjecting collective agreement to the prior approval of the Ministry of Labour before they can come into force.

Article 9

The Committee of Experts made comments on several questions concerning the absence or inadequacy of provisions for workmen's compensation under the following Conventions:

Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 12)
Workmen's Compensation (Accidents) Convention, 1925 (No. 17)
Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention, 1925 (No. 18)

NORWAY

Information concerning this country was supplied in the second (E/1979/33) and the seventh (E/1985/63) reports of the ILO.

For a number of cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

Norway has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 2, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30,32, 34, 42, 44, 47, 81, 87, 88, 96, 98, 100, 101, 102, 105, 111, 118, 119, 120, 122, 128, 129, 130, 132, 135, 139, 141, 142, 148, 151, 152, 154, 155, 156, 159, 162, 167 and 168.

Article 6

Further to earlier comments made under the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies (Revised) Convention, 1949 (No. 96), the adoption of various Regulations was noted by the Committee of Experts in its 1992 comments. It requested information on their application.

As concerns the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) the Committee of Experts made reference in its 1991 comments to earlier comments on the application of Article 1(2) of the Convention and section 55 of the Worker Protection and Working Environment Act. Section 55A of that Act is drafted in such a way that employers could question job applicants about their political, religious or cultural where such views are not relevant to the inherent requirements of a given job. In this respect the Committee of Experts noted from the Government's report that a possible revision of section 55A would be considered by a Government-appointed tripartite committee currently charged with discussing a large-scale revision of the above-mentioned Act and that the results of this work was expected to be available at the end of 1991. The Committee of Experts therefore expressed the hope that section 55A of the Act would be worded, interpreted and applied in a manner which does not conflict with the Convention and does not permit discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national

extraction or social origin, excepting "in respect of a particular job based on the inherent requirements thereof".

In its 1992 observation on the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), the Committee of Experts noted that there were worrying developments in the employment situation according to the Government's report, including a drop in employment and the contraction of the labour market. It was further noted that in order to deal with unemployment, the scope of various labour market policy measures had been considerably extended. The Committee of Experts hoped that the Government would continue to supply detailed information on the various labour market policy programmes and measures.

As concerns the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) it was noted by the Committee of Experts in 1990 that according to the Government few provisions deal with workers who are responsible for members of their family other than children. The Committee therefore asked the Government to indicate what measures have been taken or are planned to apply the various Articles of the Convention to workers with responsibilities in relation to members of their immediate family (other than their dependent children) who clearly need their care or support.

Article 7

In relation to the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) the Committee of Experts noted in 1992 the Government's statement that the number of complaints made to the Equal Status Ombudsman concerning equal pay contraventions under section 5 of the Equal Status Act seemed to have become stabilised at a relatively low level in relation to the pay inequalities that still exist. It further noted that as part of a modernisation of the public sector, new wage determination systems have been introduced for the central and local governments. The Committee of Experts asked the Government to continue reporting on the impact these new wage-fixing system have on the application of the Convention. The Committee of Experts has also noted the statistical data showing an acceleration in the trend towards greater equality, following a period of stagnation in the relative earnings of women and men in the 1980s.

In relation to the Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115), the Committee of Experts noted in 1992 that there were no specific plans to introduce new provisions concerning maximum permissible doses for workers who are not directly engaged in work involving ionising radiation since the level of exposure is, in practice, low.

As concerns the Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974 (No. 139) the Government was requested by the Committee of Experts in its 1992 comments to indicate whether Toxic Substance Regulations had been issued.

Under the Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148), the Committee of Experts had noted in its previous comments that new Norwegian standards had been issued concerning vibration, but that the Labour Inspectorate had not yet adopted a formal position on the use of these standards. In its 1990 comments the Committee therefore requested the Government to supply information concerning progress in establishing exposure limits and protective measures with regard to vibrations.

Article 8

In its 1992 comments by the Committee of Experts under the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), it considered the conclusions of the Committee on the Freedom of Association in Case No. 1576, concerning the restrictions imposed on the right to strike by legislative means in the oil industry through the imposition of compulsory arbitration. It was pointed out by the Committee of Experts that the principle whereby the right to strike may be limited or prohibited in essential services would become meaningless if the legislation defined essential services too broadly.

Article 9

As concerns the Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118) the Committee of Experts noted with interest that the convention on social security concluded with the Netherlands, provides that each member State accepts the obligation to pay family allowance on reciprocal terms in respect of the children residing in its own territory.

POLAND

Information concerning this country was supplied in the second (E/1979/33) and the eighth (E/1986/60) reports of the ILO.

For a number of cases the questions previously raised have been reiterated in more recent comments by the ILO. Additional information is provided below.

Poland has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): Conventions Nos. 2, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 29, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 48, 62, 87, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 105, 111, 119, 120, 122, 135, 140, 141, 142 and 151.

Article 6

In relation to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 comments that members of the youth brigades serve in the civil defence service. It therefore asked the Government to provide information on the youth brigades, stating in particular the length and the nature of the service, whether it is voluntary or compulsory, and whether it is performed in place of or as well as military service.

Under the Fee-Charging Employment Agencies (Revised) Convention, 1949 (No. 96), the Committee of Experts asked in 1992 for clarification on who may be authorised to act as an employment agency under the Act respecting employment and unemployment. It also asked the Government to indicate whether fee-charging agencies had been established in practice, and to describe the measures for the supervision of the activities.

In relation to the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) the Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction, in its 1992 observation, the repeal of the Act of 28 April 1952 respecting work on board Polish seagoing vessels in international navigation which has been replaced by the Act of 23 May 1991 respecting work on board seagoing merchant vessels. The old legislation contained certain provisions concerning the discipline of seafarers and had been the subject of the Committee of Experts' comments for some years.

As concerns the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) the Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction, in its 1992 comments, the elimination of political criteria as a basis for the appointment or removal of judges. It further noted that a national committee had been set up for the revision of labour legislation and that a group of experts had been appointed to examine the conformity of the legislation with international labour standards relating to the protection of human rights. The Committee of Experts once again requested the Government to supply information on the measures taken to ensure that political opinion is not taken into account in connection with employment and the appraisal of skills in the public service. The Government was also asked to provide comprehensive information on the measures taken to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in the fields covered by the Convention.

In its comments by the Committee of Experts under the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), it was noted that the labour market data mention an unemployment rate of 9.8 per cent on 31 August 1991. The transition to a market economy is, according to the Government, accompanied by a downward trend in the overall level of employment and, since the beginning of 1991, the process of restructuring the economy has directly contributed to the increase in

unemployment. An ILO technical cooperation project was being carried out for the development of employment services, designed to strengthen the capacity of employment services in the areas of vocational guidance, placement, training and the promotion of employment and self-employment programmes. The Committee of Experts asked the Government to supply information on the result of this project, and on the active measures taken in general to combat unemployment and the results achieved.

Under the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), the Committee of Experts made reference in 1992 to its comments under Convention No. 122. It asked the Government to provide detailed information on the new procedures for organising the vocational guidance system and all available statistical information on the practical application of the Convention.

Article 7

In relation to the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Committee of Experts requested the Government in 1992 to indicate the measures taken to ensure that individual enterprises evaluate, describe and grade jobs according to criteria that take into account those factors most prevalent in the work done by women. The Government was asked whether the provisions to introduce uniformity into methods of job evaluation, as described in the Government's report, continue to be applied.

Article 8

As concerns the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 comments that the new Acts of 23 May 1991 concerning trade unions, employers' organisations and the settlement of collective labour disputes apply the Convention to a large extent. In particular it noted with satisfaction that: (i) the possibility of trade union pluralism is set out in the law; (ii) workers have the right to strike; and (iii) trade unions no longer exercise functions related to labour discipline. The Committee of Experts, however, asked the Government to supply information on a number of questions concerning the implementation in practice of the rights provided for in the Convention.

In relation to the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), it was noted with satisfaction by the Committee of Experts in 1992 that the new Act concerning trade unions no longer empowers the employer to make a unilateral decision concerning the conclusion or modification of a works collective agreement in the event that the trade union organisations have not reached an agreed position. It recalled, however, that legislation which permits the refusal of approval of a collective agreement on grounds other than the errors of pure form may amount to a requirement that prior approval be obtained before a collective agreement can come into force, which is not in conformity with the principles of voluntary negotiation established in Article 4 of the Convention.

Under the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135) the Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction in its observation of 1992 that the new Trade Union Act of 23 May 1991 ensures better application of the Convention.

As concerns the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151), the Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction in 1992 that the new Trade Union Act ensures better application of the Convention to persons employed in the state administration by removing the obligation on public employees and by restricting the scope of the provisions excluding certain public employees with highly confidential duties or managerial functions from the right to organise.

Situation concerning Article 10 of the Covenant

CZECH AND SLOVAK FEDERAL REPUBLIC

For previous indications see the Committee's fourth (E/1981/41) and ninth (E/1987/59) reports.

The Government has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): C. Nos. 5, 10, 13, 77, 78, 90, 123, 124 and 136.

Article 10(3)

As concerns both the Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 5), and the Minimum Age (Agriculture), 1921 (No. 10), the Committee of Experts requested information in 1992 on the practical application of the legislation giving effect to the Convention, following the adoption of Act No. 3/1991 amending the Labour Code.

In relation to the Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 123), the Committee of Experts noted with satisfaction the adoption of Decree No. 91/939/790 prohibiting underground work for workers under 21 years of age. This is an increase of 3 years, from 18 to 21 years of age.

ITALY

The ILO has not previously provided information on the application by Italy of this Article.

The Government has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): C. Nos. 3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 58, 59, 60, 73, 77, 78, 79, 90, 103, 112, 115, 117, 123, 124, 127, 136, and 138.

Article 10(2)

Under the Maternity Protection (Revised) Convention, 1952 (No. 103), the Committee of Experts noted, in its 1989 observation, the intention of the Government to modify Act No. 1204 of 1971 with a view to making rules governing the protection of pregnant women workers and working mothers against dismissal applicable to domestic workers, thus bringing the legislation into conformity with the Convention. The collective agreement for domestic work of 28 April 1987, noted by the Committee of Experts in its previous comment, is not in conformity with Article 6 of the Convention.

Article 10(3)

As concerns the Night Work of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations), 1946 (No. 79), the Committee of Experts made a number of points in its 1991 comments concerning Circular No. 67/89, of 6 July 1989, addressed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance to the inspection services, which lays down specific conditions according to the age of the young persons for the delivery of licences to children to participate in the preparation and presentation of performances and filming. The Committee of Experts expressed the hope that the necessary measures will be taken in the near future to bring the legislation into conformity with Convention on the above points.

In relation to the White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13), the Committee of Experts noted in its 1992 comments that the general minimum age for working in dangerous or unhealthy work, including painting work involving the use of white lead, is 16 years by virtue of Decree No. 432 of 20 January 1976, and is applicable to both men and women. It was recalled by the Committee of Experts that Article 3(1) of the Convention provides that the employment of

males under 18 years of age and of all females shall be prohibited in any painting work of an industrial character involving the use of white lead or sulphate of lead or other products containing these pigments. The Government was therefore requested to indicate the measures taken or envisaged in conformity with this Article of the Convention.

Comments made by the Committee of Experts in 1992 under the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) pointed out that the exception provided for in Article 7 of the Convention is intended to cover light work which is not likely to be harmful to the health or prejudice the school attendance of the persons concerned. The Committee of Experts requested information on measures to ensure that in agriculture the employment or work of children below the minimum age is permitted only for light work, as is presently the case in non-industrial branches of activity.

NICARAGUA

The ILO has not previously provided information on the application by Nicaragua of this Article.

The Government has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): C. Nos. 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 20, 77, 78, 115, 117, 127, 136 and 138.

Article 10(2)

As concerns the Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), it was noted by the Committee of Experts in its 1992 observation that, according to the Government, the present economic situation in the country does not allow it to assume the cost of cash benefits for women not yet covered by the social security scheme. The Committee of Experts, however, repeated its hope that the extension of the social security scheme might take place gradually, so that maternity cash benefits be paid throughout the national territory in conformity with Article 3(c) of the Convention "by means of a system of insurance", and not by the employer.

Article 10(3)

As concerns the Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946 (No. 77) and the Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations), 1946 (No. 78), the Committee of Experts has for several years drawn the Government's attention to the absence of specific laws or regulations to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. In its 1992 comments the Committee noted also that the draft Labour Code contains no provisions to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. The Committee of Experts therefore hoped that the Government would make every effort not to delay adoption of the necessary measures in this context.

In relation to the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), it was noted by the Committee of Experts in 1992 that, according to the Government's report, the draft Labour Code, drawn up with the assistance of the ILO, should give full effect to the Convention. With that in view the Committee of Experts repeated a number of points from previous comments concerning certain provisions of the Convention.

NORWAY

For previous indications see the Committee's fourth (E/1981/41) and tenth (E/1988/6) reports.

The Government has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): C. Nos. 5, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 58, 59, 73, 90, 112, 113, 115, and 138.

Article 10(3)

As concerns the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), in its 1992 comments the Committee of Experts once again requested the Government to indicate whether the Act of 15 February 1918 concerning Industrial Work at Home had been revised to establish a minimum age of admission to such employment.

POLAND

For previous indications see the Committee's fourth (E/1981/41), ninth (E/1987/59) and eleventh (E/1989/6) reports.

The Government has ratified the following relevant Conventions (for full names see list of Conventions in Part II A above): C. Nos. 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 73, 77, 78, 79, 90, 103, 112, 113, 115, 123, 124, 127 and 138.

As concerns the Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), it was noted by the Committee of Experts in 1990 that the termination of a woman worker's contract of employment without notice through her own fault during her pregnancy or maternity leave is now possible only if the works council has given its consent. Article 6 of the Convention prohibits giving notice of dismissal in any circumstance to a woman while absent from work on maternity leave or at such a time that the notice would expire during such absence.

ANNEX

Index of countries and of relevant information supplied by the ILO since 1978

Country	Articles 6-9 (Document reference)	Article 10 (Document reference)
Afghanistan	E/1986/60 E/1989/6 E/1990/9 E/1991/4	
Australia	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1986/60
Austria	E/1988/6	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Barbados	E/1982/41	E/1982/41
Bulgaria	E/1980/35 E/1985/63	E/1983/40 E/1988/6
Belarus, Republic of	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Cameroon		E/1988/6
Canada	E/1982/41 E/1988/6 E/1989/6	
Chile	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1988/6
Colombia	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1990/9
Costa Rica	E/1990/9 E/1991/4	E/1990/9
Cyprus	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1986/60 E/1989/6
Czech and Slovak Federal Republic	E/1979/33 E/1986/60	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Denmark	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Dominican Republic	E/1990/9 E/1991/4	E/1990/9 E/1991/4
Ecuador	E/1978/27 E/1985/63	E/1990/9 E/1991/4

Country	Articles 6-9 (Document reference)	Article 10 (Document reference)
Finland	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1986/60
France	E/1986/60	E/1989/6
German Democratic Republic	E/1978/27 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Germany, Federal Republic of	E/1979/33 E/1986/60	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Hungary	E/1978/27 E/1985/63	E/1986/60
India	E/1986/60	
Iran, Islamic Republic of	E/1978/27	
Iraq	E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1986/60
Italy	E/1982/41	
Jamaica	E/1980/35 E/1989/6	E/1989/6
Japan	E/1985/63	E/1987/59
Jordan	E/1987/59	E/1987/59
Luxembourg	E/1990/9	E/1990/9
Madagascar	E/1981/41 E/1985/63	E/1986/60
Mexico	E/1985/63	E/1990/9
Mongolia	E/1978/27 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
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Nicaragua	E/1986/60	
Norway	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1988/6
Panama	E/1988/6 E/1989/6 E/1990/9 E/1991/4 E/1992/4	E/1981/41 E/1988/6 E/1989/6 E/1991/4
Peru	E/1985/63	

Country	Articles 6-9 (Document reference)	Article 10 (Document reference)
Philippines	E/1978/27 E/1985/63	
Poland	E/1979/33 E/1986/60	E/1981/41 E/1987/59 E/1989/6
Romania	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1988/6
Rwanda	E/1985/63 E/1989/6	E/1986/60
Senegal		E/1981/41
Spain	E/1980/35 E/1985/63	E/1982/41 E/1986/60
Sweden	E/1978/27 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
Syrian Arab Republic	E/1980/35 E/1990/9 E/1992/4	E/1981/41 E/1990/9
Tanzania		E/1981/41
Trinidad and Tobago	E/1989/6	E/1989/6
Tunisia	E/1978/27	E/1988/6 E/1989/6
Ukrainian SSR	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1982/41 E/1986/60
USSR	E/1979/33 E/1985/63	E/1981/41 E/1987/59
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Yemen	E/1990/9 E/1991/4	E/1990/9 E/1991/4
Yugoslavia	E/1983/40 E/1985/63	E/1983/40
Zaire	E/1988/6	E/1988/6
Zambia		E/1986/60

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Progress achieved and obstacles encountered in implementing the social development goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade

Report of the Secretary-General

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INTRODUCTION

1. In the period leading up to the General Assembly's adoption in 1990 of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (resolution 45/199), the Commission for Social Development considered in extenso ways and means by which to reaffirm the fundamental importance of social goals in the development process.

2. At its thirty-first session, in 1989, the Commission agreed on a series of proposals regarding the social dimension of the forthcoming development strategy, the taking into consideration of which by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for the Preparation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade was subsequently recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1989/55; also, the Commission decided, in its resolution 31/3, to give priority attention at its thirty-second session to two specific subjects, one of which was "the social impact of the critical economic environment on developing countries: strategies for social development cooperation". The selection by the Commission of that topic for in-depth consideration reflected, inter alia, the interest of both developed and developing countries in strengthening cooperation to achieve higher levels of living and improved social conditions in the face of new challenges for social policy (E/CN.5/1991/5, para. 2).

3. At its thirty-second session, the Commission considered strategies for social development cooperation on the basis of the report of an Expert Group Meeting (E/CN.5/1991/5, annex), organized by the United Nations and hosted by the Government of Finland.* In its report, the Expert Group identified a range of difficulties that had to be confronted, and conditions met, to increase the effectiveness of social policy interventions, particularly support by multilateral and bilateral international cooperation agencies.

4. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1991/12 on strategies for social development cooperation, inter alia, endorsed the views and suggestions contained in the report of the Expert Group; invited organizations of the United Nations system, other international organizations and Member States to review their goals and operating procedures in the light of the considerations and suggestions offered by the Expert Group; and called upon all Member States to ensure that social concerns were fully integrated in all development cooperation projects and activities. The Economic and Social Council also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its substantive session of 1993, through the Commission for Social Development, on progress achieved and obstacles encountered in implementing the social

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* The Meeting of the Expert Group on the Social Impact of the Critical Economic Environment on Developing Countries: Strategies for Social Development Cooperation was held at Järvenpää, Finland, from 17 to 21 September 1990.

development goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, and on the progress made in elaborating the suggestions and recommendations of the Expert Group. The present report is submitted in response to the request of the Economic and Social Council.

5. The International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade was adopted in 1990, just two years ago. The Secretary-General reported to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on progress towards its implementation (A/47/270-E/1992/74). Additional information of particular interest to the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-third session and the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993 is found elsewhere in the documentation made available to those bodies, inter alia, in the report on the implementation of the international plans and programmes of action previously agreed by the world community, to which reference is made in the Strategy. World social trends and current conditions are also reported in the Report on the World Social Situation.

6. The present report, therefore, will describe recent thinking on the nature of social development and the scope for social policy, in the context of the International Development Strategy; it will also propose several areas in which existing activities for development and international cooperation may be revised or expanded, based on the suggestions and recommendations of the Expert Group. Texts of the relevant sections of the Strategy and the Expert Group recommendations may be found in the annexes to this report.

I. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE 1990s

7. The term social development is applied to a very broad field of activities. Often, social development has meant action in the social sectors - health, education, housing, welfare services, water and sanitation facilities. Investment in those sectors was said to lead to social development. In fact, using the term social development can lead to confusion. Social development is not separate from any other type of development, and to create the impression that there can be one kind of development that is called economic and another that is called social is misleading. Instead, a multidisciplinary view of development, defined in terms of improved abilities of individuals to control their own lives, through economic, political and social action, is being increasingly preferred.

8. Activities to promote development would focus on the dynamic relations within and among societies, with the goal of improving material conditions while reducing the likelihood of social confrontation through increased opportunities for individual and community growth. Such a notion recognizes that development touches all aspects of life and all groups and classes in society; the aim of development is to benefit the entire society. While maintaining the ideal of achieving economic growth with equity and social

solidarity, this approach encourages reconsideration of the means to be utilized and the role of government in achieving the goals. In contrast with a welfarist view of social justice, which has often led to a levelling-down egalitarianism, the approach discussed in the present report gives the emphasis to levelling up through policies and intervention to enhance the capacity of low-productivity sectors, low-income segments and socially disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of the population. In a certain sense this change reflects, but also predates, the move away from the welfare state in favour of the welfare society. It indicates an awareness that within the framework of social welfare and development activities, people must be viewed as actors and not just as objects.

9. Increasingly, strategies are aiming to encourage processes and institutional change through the strengthening of people's consciousness and of their understanding of issues that affect them. The emphasis has been on the creation of conditions whereby all segments of society can improve their circumstances, and whereby people who are poor, disadvantaged or suffering discrimination can undertake positive action to improve their condition. To be effective and sustainable, activities for development must start from the perspective of the people who are expected to derive benefit from them, based on their current circumstances, their beliefs and traditions, their resources, their problems and the solutions to those problems that they believe to be acceptable.

10. This approach combines economic, political, social and cultural elements corresponding to a comprehensive definition of development. An important distinction between this perspective and that of traditional social development becomes clear. Investment in the social sectors becomes a tool for development, reflecting the presence of an educated and healthy population and workforce, which are best able to contribute to economic growth and development. There can be little argument that such investments are important and Governments should devote increasing shares of their resources to them, as conditions permit. Nevertheless, improved health, education, housing and sanitation, although they reflect development, are not sufficient or satisfactory determinants of development, as recent events in some countries indicate.

11. In recognition of these ideas, the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade is unlike its predecessors. It suggests basic principles, or conditions for development, but does not establish quantitative targets. The Strategy offers a consensus view of the areas where action is required, spelling out "an agreed understanding on the issues and challenges, the actions and the commitments, on the basis of principles for national and international action that will remain valid".

12. The Strategy stresses that "an acceleration in the rate of economic growth is an essential objective for the 1990s". It goes on to state that such growth "is a condition for expanding the resource base of the developing countries and hence for economic, technological and social transformation. But economic growth by itself does not ensure that its benefits will be

equitably distributed or that the physical environment will be protected and improved. Yet, if poverty persists or increases and there is neglect of the human condition, political and social strains will grow and endanger stability". In the Strategy, special attention is given "to the policies and measures needed in the areas of poverty alleviation, human resource development and the environment". Furthermore, the text of the Strategy states that "the decade of the 1990s must witness a significant improvement in the human condition everywhere and establish a mutually reinforcing relationship between economic growth and human welfare. The need to strengthen this relationship is, in fact, a principal theme of the present Strategy. It has not only to be reflected in national efforts but must also be promoted by the international community through financial and technical support".

13. The recognition of the fact that it is essential to strengthen the relationship between economic growth and human welfare reflects the desire to avoid separating economic and social development. It also indicates that the trickle down of benefits has proved elusive and that Governments maintain a major responsibility for ensuring the welfare of citizens, even as the precise way in which that responsibility may best be discharged changes with circumstances. A common method is being suggested, however, to the extent that Governments are encouraged to concentrate on creating environments for action, in addition to implementing specific activities. The Strategy has begun to reflect a view of development that gained support during the past decade. According to that view, how development activities (and the learning that may be induced therefrom) are conceived and implemented is as important to potential beneficiaries as what those activities promise to deliver in terms of tangible, physical improvements.

II. ELABORATING THE SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT GROUP: DEVELOPMENT FROM A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

14. Based on the work of the Expert Group (see para. 3 above) and on experience obtained through technical cooperation activities, it is possible to identify several areas in which improvements in development operations may be suggested.

A. Object of policy

15. A number of conceptual frameworks have been elaborated, including various versions within the United Nations Secretariat. All of these emphasize "the social perspective of development", with its central message that development activities should be defined in terms of their social impact. The object of development policy as implemented through various programmes and projects might (stated briefly) thus be to promote:

(a) Improved living conditions and a better quality of life for all population groups, segments of society and social strata, with an emphasis on ensuring equal opportunity, particularly between women and men;

(b) An environment in which each individual has the possibility to advance towards his or her goals and can fully participate in defining the common goals of society and the manner of carrying out policies that affect the common welfare, without discrimination;

(c) Respect for the equal worth of each human being, and public institutions that embody this concept and can respond to the evolving needs of society and the changing aspirations of groups and individuals;

(d) A climate of reward for effort and initiative, and at the same time of protection, through public and voluntary community efforts, of the dignity and welfare of disadvantaged, vulnerable and dependent people;

(e) Cohesion in the process of change, which reconciles different individual values and aspirations and harmonizes with the physical environment, and thus remains sustainable over generations.

16. Policy must seek to create an appropriate macrocontext, taking societal structures into consideration and helping to clarify the role government chooses to take in the development process. The description of development as the strengthening of people's abilities to help themselves, which indicates a concentration on grass-roots activities, does not entail abrogation of government's vital contribution to the process. It is necessary to ensure a proper policy context: government policy must be brought to bear on support of initiative and enterprise in all spheres. It would be pointless to encourage the development of small-scale activities without seeking to improve policies that have an impact upon them. The need to simultaneously support small-scale initiatives and government intervention is not contradictory. Indeed, a two-pronged approach to development is required, that is, complementary efforts (from the top down and from the bottom up) that promote grass-roots initiatives while encouraging the top, in its decision-making, to create a climate appropriate to the nurturing of actions taken from the bottom.

17. Such ideas have helped to define more clearly the possibilities available to various actors in the development process, as well as to identify potential areas for their collaborative actions. Governments, international agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations all have important roles and functions that may sometimes appear to conflict but might more often prove to be complementary, given the proper structural arrangements and conceptual or organizing framework.

B. Tangible and intangible aspects of development

18. If development is about processes rather than attainment of physical, quantifiable goals, then promoting development involves nurturing those processes. Unfortunately, processes are usually difficult to measure and goals - such as participation, empowerment, social justice, improved understanding and ability to influence the course of events confronted - are often intangible. At the same time, development activities tend to be

concrete and specific actions, designed to provide tangible improvements. Rather than establish a paralysing contradiction, however, this situation provides an opportunity: development programmes and projects, if they are appropriately conceived and sensitively implemented, can not only produce physical improvements, but also encourage attainment of these intangible goals and lead to sustainable development.

19. This has not proved easy to accomplish. Although development literature, national development plans and project documents often refer to the importance of achieving intangible goals of development, there remains a large gap between rhetoric and reality. Steps required to reach desired goals have perhaps been unclear or have simply not been taken. Often, intangible aspects of development have been sacrificed to organizational requirements or project efficiency. In many cases, projects continue to be drawn up and implemented with little regard for their long-term impact or effectiveness.

20. For example, the importance of wide and genuinely voluntary participation in development activities is universally accepted and yet many activities continue to be designed by experts and imposed from above or outside. True participation, as distinct from the mobilization of people to carry out tasks decided from above, would require the beneficiaries of an activity to be its designers and the motivating force for its implementation.

21. The role of outsiders becomes that of encouraging and supporting local initiative, and they must retain awareness of intangible goals throughout the project cycle, so that in addition to the material benefits that accrue, there may also be a strengthening of intangible goals during project implementation. Development work is thus not simply a question of delivering services to people, but of helping them to become better agents of their own development. Progress should be measured in terms of people's increasing awareness of achieving, and desire and ability to achieve, control over their lives. Activities would seek not just to strengthen institutions, but also to increase the abilities of individuals or communities, within institutional settings, to understand, formulate, express and act upon their needs.

C. Programme and project approaches

22. The ability of international agencies and Governments to encourage intangible aspects of development may be restrained by the nature of the planning they undertake. The type of planning often called for and that they might provide - flexible, process- and learning-oriented, grass-roots-level and people-centred - is hindered by organizational and administrative requirements designed to ensure continued accountability and support. Few donors are likely to contribute to an activity that is vague about its objectives, time lines or spending requirements, nor would many recipient governments be eager to have projects funded that have no fixed objectives or that cannot claim to serve a desired purpose. Thus, over the years a system has evolved that seeks to ensure stability and accountability throughout the project cycle.

23. The exigencies of the existing project cycle tend to preclude substantial innovation. Development workers may become complacent or pressured in their work, so that the task of shepherding projects through the cycle acquires more importance than that of ensuring that projects remain appropriate to their circumstances or lead to signficant improvements. The project document itself may be counter-productive. By requiring the output to be clearly defined at the time of project development, the project document in fact requires the solutions to be defined before the problems may be sufficiently understood. A learning process approach, which stresses learning by doing and allows directions to be changed according to what is learned, introduces more flexibility to the cycle but is more difficult to implement.

24. A way out of the dilemma may lie in the wider utilization of a programme approach, which has recently been the subject of renewed discussion and, indeed, has been advocated, inter alia, by the Economic and Social Council. A programme approach emphasizes strategy and policy development, and strengthening of national capacity, as well as flexibility in execution. With this approach, resources may be allocated to selected sectors but not tied to individual projects. Rather than fund a dozen different individual health projects, for example, a donor agency might establish a health fund from which money could periodically be allocated in small amounts and moved about as situations change and learning accumulates. This approach encourages decentralization of authority and a reduction in bureaucratic elements.

25. A programme approach might also encourage greater cross-sectoral collaboration among government ministries and international agencies. Programmes might be established in targeted areas, such as those of integrated rural development and urban slum upgrading, to which each ministry or agency could contribute its expertise. Other areas, such as protection of the environment or the campaign against acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), require multidimensional intervention, and could benefit from a programme approach that integrates the contributions of numerous agencies. Further discussion of the programme and project approaches will take place, and much more empirical evidence should be collected, before decisions regarding the merits of either approach can be reached. In any event, Governments and development agencies need not confront an either/or decision on programme versus project funding: some combination of the two approaches, appropriate to local needs, would make sense and at the very least it should be possible to expand the options available.

D. Decentralization

26. Currently, the prime concern of many central organizations, whether of government or international agencies, seems to be to control development activities rather than to encourage sustainable development. To the extent that it may stifle innovation, central control can be counter-productive. The objective should be to respond to changing circumstances with flexibility and to meet diverse needs with multiple responses. Decentralization of authority is a step in the right direction, and a programme approach may prove useful in increasing flexibility.

27. Responsibility for ensuring social well-being will remain primarily with central Governments, but the implementation of programmes may be decentralized to district and local levels, or subcontracted to non-governmental organizations. While they would remain the authority of last resort in questions regarding programme implementation, central organizations could be relieved of daily responsibility for programme decisions so that they might concentrate on providing support to decentralized units and on training field staff to fulfil their increased responsibilities effectively. Central organizations should, indeed, delegate authority to the field and become primarily concerned with ensuring that the field staff have the resources, the talent and the training to carry out their tasks. Increasingly, successful and effective development activities will rely on dedicated people being allowed to proceed with their work. Countless anecdotes support the view that individual fieldworkers can have tremendous impact on development projects, perhaps even to the extent of determining their ultimate success or failure. Rather than devote themselves to the maintenance of structures and procedures for control, central administrations can improve effectiveness by focusing attention on ensuring the best selection, preparation and continuing support of those dedicated people.

28. At the same time, decentralization can help to motivate staff who might become frustrated in existing organizational structures. In many centralized organizations, where decision-making can remain strongly hierarchical and where staff can feel isolated from the results of their work, there may be little incentive or motivation for staff to ensure high quality of activities. Decentralization, by placing more responsibility in the hands of people working closer to actual conditions (where they can feel they are making concrete contributions), can serve to motivate staff and improve operations.

III. STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

29. In an effort to encourage development activities to be more effective, Governments and international agencies may review the functions of staff and encourage the evolution of many current activities. This will apply at all levels, from that of fieldworkers to those of government officials and staff of international organizations. In brief, development fieldworkers, rather than simply implement projects to provide services, should become facilitators in the development process. Their performance could be measured in terms of their abilities in working with individuals and groups to achieve the self-provision of basic human needs. Ministry personnel and staff of international agencies would become "enablers": a primary function would be to establish a climate that encourages grass-roots initiatives by developing and implementing supporting policy, by ensuring adequate resources and by working to establish forward and backward linkages through networks of organizations operating in partnership. Central authorities should assume a supporting role, which in many respects is more complex than the tasks currently being performed.

30. The previous sections have proposed a view of development from a social perspective and suggested areas in which international organizations and Governments may wish to evaluate their operations to make them more socially sensitive, effective and sustainable. Individual organizations and Governments will develop their own approaches and adopt suggestions as appropriate to their circumstances. When doing so, they may wish to consider the comments and ideas presented below as means for strengthening development activities. The suggestions are offered primarily to ministries of social affairs or their equivalents in developing countries, to international organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, and to bilateral donors. These may be the organizations that might be most interested in promoting a social perspective of development through their activities, although the ideas presented might be applied by any interested ministry or organization. Some of the activities may be new, whereas others may simply represent an extension of current responsibilities. Suggestions for activities are illustrated by the examples listed under the six headings below.

A. Social analysis

31. This activity would include making of projections based on the collection of relevant social data, clarification of current major issues of social concern, and identification and targeting of social groups requiring assistance.

32. At the local level, staff should have responsibility for gathering information, inter alia, through informal means, that can be provided to central policy makers. Channels of communication may need to be strengthened to ensure the two-way flow of information. The goals are to encourage local staff to have input into decision-making and to ensure that policy remains responsive to circumstances in the field.

33. At the national level, social analysis should be fully integrated into overall national development planning. Policies in all sectors, whether or not they are considered social, will have some social impact and that impact should be recognized and evaluated. Feedback may then be provided to sectoral ministries on their programme implementation. The ministry of social affairs or its equivalent should have sufficient input into government's overall policy development.

B. Policy development

34. Action will occur primarily at the national level, based on input from local sources, and should include the design of social strategies and policies that recognize diversity and seek it out, responding with multiple solutions. There is a tendency in politics and in policy-making to oversimply problems and their potential solutions. Issues are generally complex and policies must respond in a multifaceted fashion while remaining flexible to changing circumstances. Programmes should be based on expanding current knowledge rather than on importing techniques or technologies.

35. In every sector it might be possible to re-examine the traditional wisdom regarding policy development and implementation. A major goal of development policy would be to engage government to counteract inequalities in society, not by controlling economic activity but by intervening, directly and indirectly, to influence the sharing of resources and opportunities. Staff would emphasize broad-based, multisectoral solutions that are inclusive, rather then exclusive. In other words, activities should aim to involve groups currently left out of societal interaction and motivate them to participate and contribute to society. Priority should be given as much to the strengthening of the process and modes of participation as to the delivery of services.

36. To support decentralization, government, with the assistance of international agencies as requested, would set standards for the delivery of services, including the promotion of self-help activities and support for the work of non-governmental organizations. Governments and agencies would concentrate on motivating private or non-governmental efforts and overseeing their results.

C. Advocacy

37. This activity is closely linked to policy-making. There is a vital function to be performed in promoting socially sensitive decision-making and coordination of activities among ministries; a social affairs ministry can have the responsibility for providing evaluation and social feedback on the sectoral activities of other ministries or departments and, in so doing, represent the interests and concerns of groups that may need special attention or tend to be overlooked in the planning process. Such groups may include women, young people, the elderly, disabled persons, ethnic or religious minorities, migrants and refugees.

38. Advocacy can be used to promote the viewpoint and the concerns of those groups and assist them in expressing their needs and demands vis-à-vis government and international organizations. To some extent, this function may often be performed by non-governmental institutions, but their success in attracting sufficient attention and interest may be limited by their position outside government. There is scope for a natural collaboration between government and non-governmental organizations to promote social well-being.

D. Training

39. Development activities in the coming years will require increasingly workers who are both capable of communicating with local people and sensitized for recognizing the elements of traditional societies (whether those elements are social, economic or political) upon which development activities can be based.

40. At all levels, training activities and skills development could focus on identifying and enriching cross-cultural understanding, interpersonal

communications and problem-solving skills. Training of staff in government ministries must respond to the realities of work for civil servants, including bureaucratic or administrative limits and resource constraints; if training remains theoretical, it may prove irrelevant and fail to be applied in real situations. Training for workers in the field should concentrate on providing basic skills in communication and understanding of group dynamics, as well as on teaching capacity or so-called training for trainers; it may also be necessary to provide the means to overcome traditional biases in society and to counteract the negative effects of previous development projects.

41. If central authorities are to provide adequate support for local and non-governmental providers of services, first, they need to agree with those providers on which previously centralized services will be devolved and, second, they must learn to know when and how to step back. Just as workers in the field seek to encourage growth by supporting grass-roots activities, so must central authorities recognize that their role is secondary and supportive of local initiative. Often it might be easier for development workers to usurp authority and responsibility from local groups, and for central organizations given their greater knowledge and experience as well as their contacts with the outside world, to usurp that authority and responsibility in turn. Such usurpation hinders the learning that the presence of the workers is meant to encourage, and should be avoided whenever possible.

E. Capacity-strengthening

42. As an extension of its advocacy and training roles, a ministry of social affairs might assume responsibility for raising awareness of social issues throughout government, involving undertaking of appropriate training of staff in other ministries whose work has social implications. The intention would be not only to strengthen and unify the response of government to social problems, but also to assist it in recognizing and directing appropriately its wide-ranging impact on civil society. In this activity, the ministry might receive support from international agencies or non-governmental organizations.

43. The ministry might also assist in strengthening the capacities of other organizations by serving as a clearing-house for information about ongoing activities or proposals, and by acting as broker among various government offices, international agencies and non-governmental organizations. Such activity would help to identify options, partners, resources and donor-provided aid for programme and project implementation. Thus could mutual efforts be encouraged.

F. Institutional development

44. As government and international agencies decentralize authority to local and non-governmental organizations for the delivery of services, there will remain an ongoing need to strengthen and develop those organizations. By first setting standards and then providing information, training, resources

and other necessary assistance, government can help to ensure widespread provision of basic human needs without taking primary responsibility for the delivery of services. A certain balance must be achieved, however, so that government encourages self-help and grass-roots activities while maintaining standards. Government will find it necessary to exercise oversight responsibilities without reassuming direct involvement.

45. Throughout the course of activities undertaken, it is important that outside staff, that is, staff of central ministries or international agencies, remember to maintain a service posture: their role is not to impose on communities but to assist them in solving problems. Officials and development workers must always bear in mind that their primary role is that of catalyst for development.

IV. STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

46. A great deal of discussion has taken place, at all levels, regarding the possibilities for strengthening international cooperation for social development. Consideration has been given to the question of how to improve the structures and procedures of multilateral institutions, and discussions will be continuing at the intergovernmental level. Much attention has also been directed at the provision of bilateral assistance, in both donor and recipient countries. In the light of the information presented in the present report, the question of how international cooperation for social development might be strengthened appears under two aspects: (a) how international assistance might strengthen development from a social perspective at the country level and (b) how a social perspective might affect the programmes and operations of international agencies and donor Governments.

A. International assistance to strengthen development from a social perspective

47. Governments in developing countries may require assistance from international organizations, whether multilateral, bilateral or non-governmental, to expand and alter the selection of development options for their societies, and to implement programmes and projects in ways that encourage both tangible and intangible aspects of development. Circumstances within each country will vary and so it is counter-productive to suggest a specific approach to providing assistance. Nevertheless, some areas for potential intervention may include:

(a) Creating a policy environment that supports and encourages grass-roots development;

(b) Helping to identify intangible goals of development and assisting government to implement programmes in a way that encourages the attainment of those goals;

(c) Providing a greater percentage of assistance through programmes rather than projects, in order to encourage flexibility and make it easier to incorporate experience into activities as it is gained in the field;

(d) Offering assistance, including necessary training, to enable decentralization of authority for programmes.

B. A social perspective and its effect on international development assistance

48. An approach to development that encourages social progress can be implemented locally, nationally or internationally. Organizations responsible for assisting development activities may wish to consider the suggestions offered here, with regard to not just their programmes but also their operations. In all of their dealings with national Governments or with local groups, those organizations might remember the following points:

(a) International development assistance should remain assistance and not become direction; responsibility for activities should remain at the national level, with outsiders providing support but not determining results; and outsiders should recognize that they may have as much to learn on the subject of development activities as to teach, and should adopt an open, flexible attitude;

(b) Activities should concentrate on building local capacity; the aim of development should be to make development assistance obsolete;

(c) More flexibility should be introduced into operations so that proper and timely responses to changing conditions, needs and priorities are ensured;

(d) Increasing possibilities for greater coordination of activities among agencies should become a priority; whenever appropriate, a programme approach might be utilized, especially with regard to activities designed to address multisectoral problems;

(e) During project implementation, attention should remain focused on intangible aspects of development (such as participation, empowerment, social justice and improved understanding and ability to influence the course of events confronted) and on how they may best be promoted;

(f) Organizations might advocate, internationally, on behalf of developing countries, particularly with regard to gathering and disseminating information on conditions, needs and priorities.

49. There remains great scope for international cooperation for development. While activities and priority areas will continue to evolve with changing global conditions, it is important to solidify understanding of the nature of development and of how appropriate activities might be encouraged. The

ultimate goal is to promote development not by imposing ideas or practices from without, but by nurturing people and assisting them to improve their abilities and capacities in a sustainable manner.

Annex I

THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE

1. The principle aim of the Strategy is to ensure that the 1990s are a decade of accelerated development in the developing countries and strengthened international cooperation. The decade should witness a significant improvement in the human condition in the developing countries and a reduction in the gap between rich and poor countries. It should be one in which ways are found for the world community to meet its needs without degrading the environment. The Strategy also has important social and political objectives. Development over the decade should enhance the participation of all men and women in economic and political life, protect cultural identities and assure to all the necessary means of survival. Each country is responsible for its own economic policies for development, in accordance with its specific situation and conditions, and for the life and well-being of all its citizens. The Strategy should help provide an environment that supports the evolution everywhere of political systems based on consent and respect for human rights, as well as social and economic rights, and of systems of justice that protect all citizens.

2. To achieve these fundamental aims six interrelated goals must be met. They are:

(a) A surge in the pace of economic growth in the developing countries;

(b) A development process that is responsive to social needs, seeks a significant reduction in extreme poverty, promotes the development and utilization of human resources and skills and is environmentally sound and sustainable;

(c) An improvement of the international systems of money, finance and trade so as to support the development process;

(d) A setting of strength and stability in the world economy and sound macroeconomic management, nationally and internationally;

(e) A decisive strengthening of international development cooperation;

(f) A special effort to deal with the problems of the least developed countries, the weakest among the developing countries.

3. The Strategy establishes priority aspects of development that require attention:

(a) Eradication of poverty and hunger;

(b) Human resource and institutional development;

(c) Population;

(d) Environment.

Annex II

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE CRITICAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: STRATEGIES FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

1. The Meeting emphasized that the following points were particularly important:

(a) Governments and donors must ensure that the appropriate social dimension was incorporated into all stages of development activity;

(b) That approach should be reflected in the implementation of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade;

(c) The Commission for Social Development, which had provided input for the elaboration of international development strategy, should give special attention to monitoring its implementation;

(d) Governments and donors should develop procedures to facilitate the effective participation of beneficiaries and other interested parties in project design and implementation in order to ensure that the social dimension was incorporated into all stages of development activity;

(e) Existing consultative structures, both formal and informal, should be utilized, wherever possible, in order to facilitate such effective participation;

(f) At the same time, there was a need to adapt traditional ways of bringing community influence to bear upon the decision-making process and to make better use of the capabilities of non-governmental organizations, such as cooperatives and trade unions;

(g) Governments and donors must accept that projects would increasingly require additional financial and technical inputs to ensure effective participation;

(h) Governments and donors needed to ensure that the appropriate range of professional skills were available so that an effective social input could be made into development activities; enhanced training would therefore be necessary;

(i) Donors needed to assist with funds to ensure the strengthening of planning and implementation structures in recipient countries;

(j) Governments and donors should implement programmes for the retraining and sensitization training of existing staff in order to achieve an

appropriate level of social awareness. A high priority should be given to training in relation to gender issues;

(k) Governments and donors should ensure that all development activities were aimed at enhancing de facto equality between women and men. In particular, it was necessary to identify and tackle the constraints that inhibited women's participation, health and productivity and to improve their access to critical elements of production, services and community affairs.

2. Furthermore, in considering the large and complex area of social development and developmental social welfare, the Meeting identified themes concerning the disadvantaged and vulnerable that were of immediate concern:

(a) Research and data collection;

(b) Instruments for self-help: programmes should be designed to provide instruments enabling the disadvantaged to help themselves:

(i) Information, education and communication activities to enable individuals to utilize existing channels for their participation in development;

(ii) Assistance with organization so that the disadvantaged might unite to combine their skills;

(c) Advocacy: in concert with self-help, advocacy by others on behalf of the disadvantaged is also necessary to influence those in positions of authority and to mobilize support;

(d) Training: priority should be given to training local organizers and personnel, such as social workers, in institutions and organizations in developing countries in effective strategies and techniques to benefit the disadvantaged, and to achieve equal opportunity for all;

(e) Local responsibility: for programmes to be most effective they should start at the local level, where the community is responsible for identifying a programme of action for its disadvantaged groups. It is important for communities to be sensitized to the needs and potentials of those groups and to know how best to deal with them;

(f) State responsibility: the State has overall responsibility for the welfare of all its citizens and provides the policies and operational framework within which local initiatives take place. A practical way in which the State could be instrumental in promoting help for the disadvantaged is by stimulating programmes for people to help each other. For instance, the State might form an umbrella organization to foster and coordinate the activities of community-based organizations. Additionally, where there are gaps in services or duplication of efforts by non-governmental organizations, Governments and donor agencies should use incentives to stimulate activities towards neglected areas and/or away from others that are overserved;

(g) Social criteria: projects and social programmes designed to advance the interests of the disadvantaged should:

(i) Reflect the social and cultural background of the society;

(ii) Have an impact on the root causes of the problems;

(iii) Ensure that their intended improvements are sustainable.